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President: Ms. Chatardová (Vice-President) ..... (Czechia)

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(a) **Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council**

General debate

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Ms. Chatardová (Czechia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*) (E/2017/33, E/2017/50, E/2017/64, E/2017/66, E/2017/69 and E/2017/72)

Introductory statements

1. **Mr. Wu** Hongbo (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges (E/2017/64) and the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Beyond gross domestic product: multidimensional poverty and the Sustainable Development Goals" (E/2017/69), said that the two reports should be read in conjunction as they addressed different but related aspects of eradicating poverty.

2. The first report focused on the challenges faced in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 1, the eradication of poverty, its interlinkage with other Goals, key policy actions for eradicating poverty, systemic difficulties created by the shifting global environment and opportunities for international cooperation. It referred to numerous positive experiences and tools which could be shared among Member States. Access to disaggregated data was particularly important, since it facilitated the development of evidence-based policies that could be monitored. The report also highlighted that, given the inequitable burden of poverty among women, youth and other groups, policies to promote integration and coherence were necessary, especially at the national level, including social protection measures and initiatives to ensure that trade, investment and economic integration were more effective and inclusive. Transformative action depended on coordinated efforts from all levels of public institutions and the removal of barriers between Government and private sector partners. In the report, the Secretary-General urged the international community to promote inclusive partnerships and develop capacity-building, and encouraged the Council to provide the United Nations development system with leadership and guidance on poverty eradication.

3. The second report highlighted the importance of a multi-dimensional approach to poverty eradication in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. It identified that approach as a central objective in many countries and provided an overview of national approaches and tools for tackling poverty. It highlighted the commonalities and distinctions between various national and regional approaches and briefly examined holistic strategies and approaches to growth and general well-being. An increasing number of countries were integrating multidimensional poverty reduction strategies into their national development plans and priorities. The broad diversity of national approaches therefore created ample opportunities for knowledge and information exchange. Some commonalities existed in approaches, especially in identifying health, education and living standards as key aspects of national strategies. There were many opportunities to build on those commonalities in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that respect, the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals could provide a valuable contribution to measuring and reducing multidimensional poverty.

4. Introducing the World Economic and Social Survey 2017 (E/2017/50), he said that the survey was commemorating its seventieth anniversary. The latest survey reviewed the 70 years of findings and drew lessons from the implementation of sustainable development policies over the years. Since the Sustainable Development Goals required a dynamic and thriving global economy, Member States could learn from past experience to deepen international coordination, which could in turn boost economic growth. The global economic situation in 2017, compounded by weak global growth, would probably hamper implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The survey had consistently highlighted the role of global policy coordination in supporting economic integration and stable monetary and trade systems. Countries needed adequate policy space and international support for the structural transformation necessary for carrying out the 2030 Agenda. A focus on institutions was also essential at the national level.

5. **Mr. Ocampo** (Chair of the Committee for Development Policy), introducing the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its nineteenth session (E/2017/33), said that the Committee had focused on lessons learned from developing productive capacities from countries graduated and graduating from the least developed country category. The theme of eradicating poverty in all its dimensions was important for three reasons. First, by increasing productive capacities, countries could precipitate structural transformation and create decent jobs on a large scale, thereby reducing poverty. Second, least developed countries faced the most widespread and

persistent cases of poverty and the most severe structural impediments to building productive capacities. They therefore deserved special attention. Third, there was a lot to gain from the exchange of experiences between countries which had graduated or were graduating from the least developed country category. Those lessons learned could boost the development progress of least developed countries.

6. Integrated policies to build productive capacities were required in five areas: measures to improve development governance; policies to create synergies between increased productive capacities and social outcomes; macroeconomic and financial policies to support the expansion of productive capacity and increase resilience to external shocks; industrial and sectoral policies; and international support measures in the areas of trade, official development assistance (ODA) and international tax cooperation. The Committee found that, although there was no one-size-fits-all solution, the five policy areas were relevant to all least developed countries. Peace and security, strong national ownership of the development agenda and the establishment of development-oriented institutions were also key factors in every case. It identified three pathways to an upgraded status.

7. The first pathway was that of States experiencing rapid income growth from natural resource exploitation. On account of insufficient investment in human assets and a lack of economic diversification, countries on that pathway did not move any closer to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and often large parts of their population were left in poverty. Governments had the public resources available and claimed to prioritize social sectors and economic diversification, but low transparency and weak development governance prevented them from channelling natural resource revenues into those sectors.

8. The second pathway combined income growth with investment in human assets. Countries on that pathway were typically small economies with limited scope for economic diversification. They were often vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change, overly specialized in sectors such as tourism or natural resources and plagued by inequalities. Nevertheless, good development governance in those countries facilitated the development of human assets, prudent macroeconomic policies and a pragmatic and strategic application of industrial and sectoral policies. Governments tended to emphasize social policy from the beginning of the development trajectory, adopting policies to ensure food security, create opportunities for education and facilitate access to health care. International cooperation was crucial to many countries on the second pathway, especially if donor support was well coordinated, ODA was mainstreamed into national development planning and sector-wide approaches to programming had been adopted. Some countries on the second pathway benefited from far-sighted policies regarding their diaspora and remittances.

9. A third pathway, typically associated with larger economies, was characterized by investments in human assets and structural transformation towards high-productivity manufacturing and services, contributing to steady, albeit slow, progress towards sustainable development, including the eradication of poverty. Agricultural reforms focusing on small-scale agriculture and investments in rural infrastructure were the launching pad of development. On that pathway, the State played an active and crucial role in designing appropriate policies in all relevant areas and creating and constantly adapting development-focused governance structures. As with the second pathway, countries placed strong emphasis on health and education, with the view that social policies were needed from the very beginning of structural transformation. International trade support, such as duty-free and quota-free market access, was vital to countries on the third pathway as a means of integration into the global economy, provided that they had sufficient latent capacity and had adopted complementary domestic policy reforms. Given that few of the least developed countries had benefited from preferential market access and other trade-related support, they clearly required industrial and technological upgrades and enhanced negotiating capacity.

10. During its coordination and management meetings, the Committee had also examined the reasons why almost all United Nations development system organizations recognized the least developed country category and yet some failed to apply it consistently when setting priorities and allocating budgets. The Committee had made recommendations on ensuring consistent support for least developed countries. In preparation for the 2018 triennial review of the least developed country category, it had reviewed the graduation criteria used and outlined a multi-year programme for the comprehensive review of the criteria. As the Committee might wish to recommend additional countries for graduation in 2018, it was important for the United Nations development system and development partners to provide adequate support to graduating countries

during the transition period. A transition strategy should be developed to facilitate such assistance.

11. The Committee understood the significance of the 2030 Agenda and the vital role of the United Nations in its implementation, especially that of the Council in reviewing progress and providing guidance for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee remained committed to supporting Member States in their realization of the Goals.

(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (A/71/976-E/2017/79)

General debate

12. **The President** opened the general debate of the 2017 high-level segment on the theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world".

13. **Mr. Mideros** (Ecuador), National Secretary of Planning and Development, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the 2017 high-level political forum on sustainable development was particularly significant since it was the first year in which an in-depth review of some of the Sustainable Development Goals would be conducted. Almost two years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the sobering reality was that many Member States were not on pace to achieve the Goals despite their considerable efforts. Developing countries, in particular, faced daunting challenges.

14. Any State which fully respected the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law should be fully committed to multilateralism and, in particular, to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. States should be free to exercise full and permanent sovereignty over their wealth, natural resources and economic activity. They must also respect the territorial integrity and political independence of other States and refrain from applying unilateral economic, financial or trade measures that impeded the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.

15. All States and stakeholders should devote themselves to the pursuit of win-win cooperation for global development. To do so, however, the international community must take into account the needs of developing countries, especially African States, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges faced by middle-income countries, conflict and post-conflict countries, and countries and peoples living under foreign occupation. It should be recalled that the 2030 Agenda highlighted the need to empower all vulnerable groups, including children, young people, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants.

16. If developing countries were to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, they would require an enabling international environment for development and facilitation of the means of implementation, in particular in the areas of finance, international trade, technology and capacity-building. He called on Member States to follow up on their global commitments sincerely and effectively.

17. He commended the 44 Member States that had submitted country-led voluntary national reviews for the 2017 high-level political forum. The Group of 77 and China had shown a positive and constructive attitude throughout negotiations on the draft ministerial declaration of the high-level segment, with a view to reaching a meaningful outcome. Although the text circulated by the co-facilitators fell below expectations, the Group had accepted it in its current form. He encouraged all Member States to show the same spirit of multilateralism by joining the consensus on the text. The Group would not welcome requests by Member States to reopen the text that might trigger a litany of further demands.

18. **Mr. Majeed** (Maldives), Minister of State for Environment and Energy, speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that the high-level political forum should be used to determine progress made and the actions and resources needed to improve the quality, quantity and speed of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The forum remained of particular importance to small island developing States as it was the only space available to them for a holistic review of their development progress. In that regard, he recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/290, had decided to devote adequate time during the forum to the discussion of sustainable development challenges facing small island States.

19. Small island developing States continued to face unique challenges, some due to climate change, others due to the remoteness and small size of the nations, but all of which undermined their efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Although the member countries of the Alliance had shown great leadership in confronting

those challenges and remained highly committed to doing their part in the country-led implementation of the 2030 Agenda, international cooperation and global support were critical to their achievement of the Goals.

20. The rapidly declining state of oceans and seas, caused not only by climate change but also by the cumulative impacts of ocean acidification, overfishing and marine pollution, was jeopardizing the achievement of Goal 14. Healthy oceans and seas were fundamental to the economic, environmental and social well-being of small island development States. The Alliance welcomed the commitments to decisive action arising from the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. That political momentum should be maintained to restore, conserve and sustain marine ecosystems.

21. Owing to scant domestic resources and small populations dispersed over many islands, the States members of the Alliance relied on external resource mobilization to overcome many of the challenges they faced. Private investment, however, remained insufficient because of the size and scale of island groups, not to mention the costs of disaster risk and rebuilding. Despite their vulnerability and needs, small island States were often left out of financing mechanisms and therefore required technology transfer and capacity-building in many areas, from infrastructure to data collection.

22. The recent launch of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was encouraging. The Global Action Programme originated from a mandate included within the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway) to request FAO to facilitate the creation of an initiative to focus on food security and nutrition. The fact that three members of the Alliance were submitting or had submitted voluntary national reviews in 2016 and 2017 also demonstrated the importance that the Alliance attached to the high-level political forum as a space to share experiences and best practices regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

23. **Mr. Mulusa** (Zambia), Minister of National Development Planning, speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that the Sustainable Development Goals could be achieved only if the principle of leaving no one behind was translated into action at the global, regional and national levels. That meant achieving human development for all.

24. Turning to the specific Goals under review, he said that Goal 1 remained crucial to the development agenda of landlocked developing countries. Although undernourishment, addressed in Goal 2, had decreased dramatically in the previous 15 years, the landlocked developing countries were not yet on a par with other developing countries. With regard to Goal 3, under-five mortality rates had halved since 2000 and progress had been made in stemming the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Nevertheless, the incidence of those diseases in landlocked developing countries was still higher than the average for the developing world. He called on the international community, through its continued support, to help consolidate and broaden the results achieved in health care.

25. Goal 9 on infrastructure and industrialization was of particular importance to countries beset by the high costs of trade, transport and information and communication technology, and by inadequate infrastructure. Transboundary infrastructure in most landlocked developing countries was inadequate for trade purposes. In addition, most of the Group's members were showing signs of deindustrialization that was impacting their capacity for structural transformation and economic diversification, as had been highlighted in the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024.

26. The Group agreed that Goal 17 was of paramount importance, since ODA was one of the main sources of external finance for landlocked developing countries. Development partners should therefore increase the provision of ODA and give greater consideration to the special needs of those countries. Of equal importance were initiatives like Aid for Trade, which provided their countries with technical assistance and improved transit logistics to enable them to participate in international trade. Additional assistance was also needed to make such countries more attractive for foreign direct investment and private sector participation, to fight tax evasion and avoidance and to enhance domestic financing.

27. Globalization had made rich nations richer and poor nations poorer, yet the international community had failed to act. The eradication of poverty would prove impossible unless Member States could ensure that the fruits of economic activities and growth reached all populations.

28. **Mr. Mimica** (European Union), European Commissioner for International Cooperation and

Development, said that almost two years into the 15-year timetable for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, much remained to be done. The European Union considered the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as essential and complementary steps towards a sustainable and resilient future. Ten more States members of the European Union would present their voluntary national reviews in 2017, in addition to the four that had submitted them in 2016.

29. European Union initiatives to implement the 2030 Agenda had either an internal or an external focus. The internal measures were designed to incorporate the Goals into European Union policies. Since the 2016 high-level political forum, the European Union had reaffirmed its commitment to the Paris Agreement; adopted an action plan to protect biodiversity; agreed on an ambitious energy policy to address social, environmental and competitiveness issues; adopted the European Pillar of Social Rights; conducted an in-depth report on equality between women and men in the European Union; and had been working on improving funding for sustainable strategic investment. As part of its long-term vision for realization of the Goals beyond 2020, the European Union had also established a multi-stakeholder platform for exchanging views on areas in which more efforts were needed.

30. With regard to its external measures, sustainable development had been placed at the heart of the 2016 European Union Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy, which provided a vision for joined-up, credible and responsive European Union engagement in the world. In June 2017, the signing of a new European Consensus on Development, a framework for the development policy of European Union institutions and member States, signalled a new era of more coordinated and effective action in development. The European Consensus was fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda, framed as it was around "people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership", and provided for an integrated approach to economic, social and environmental issues. Reaffirming the European Union's commitment to a rules-based global order, with multilateralism and the United Nations at its core, he said that the European Consensus underlined the intention of the European Union to work more closely with partners and countries at all stages of development.

31. To address rising inequalities, the European Union would continue to target assistance towards least-developed and conflict-affected countries and to strengthen its partnerships with middle-income and more advanced developing countries. Its new European External Investment Plan, in particular, would provide financial, technical and policy support to increase the flow of investment, especially private sector funds, to areas which would not usually receive them. In September 2017, the European Union would launch a major initiative with the United Nations to promote the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.

32. The high-level political forum was a vital component in the robust global monitoring and review process of the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda was not optional or reversible, and remained the best option for creating a better world for all.

33. **Mr. Perera** (Sri Lanka), Minister of Sustainable Development and Wildlife, speaking on behalf of the Summit-Level Group for South-South Consultation and Cooperation (Group of Fifteen), said that, in recent decades, there had been a steady decline in the number of cases of extreme poverty worldwide, and at one of the fastest rates in human history, due mainly to the economic progress of developing countries. The Group of Fifteen welcomed the inclusion of poverty eradication as an overarching goal of the key global process represented by the 2030 Agenda and would contribute to its implementation as a niche group of the global South. While the primary responsibility for implementing it rested with individual Governments, the Group hoped that, in view of the greater challenge faced by most developing and least developed countries in meeting the agreed commitments, there would be an intensification of global partnerships to enable them to keep up. The high-level political forum would provide an opportunity for laying a solid foundation for the mechanisms needed to monitor progress in implementing the Agenda; such mechanisms should at the same time reaffirm national sovereignty.

34. Meaningful technology transfers and opportunities for capacity-building were required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly through higher rates of economic growth which, together with greater socioeconomic mobility, offered the best means of uplifting the poorest segments of society. Calling therefore for the transfer of renewable energy technology and knowledge that would also address concerns over climate change, the Group strongly supported a technology facilitation mechanism that would promote the development, transfer and dissemination of environmentally-friendly technologies.

35. **Ms. McGuire** (Grenada), Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations, speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), commended the President of the Council for convening the second high-level political forum and welcomed the theme chosen for 2017, "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world". All the Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed by the forum were important, especially Goal 17 on revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. Urgent action was needed to ensure that trillions of dollars of private sector resources were channelled into sustainable development objectives.

36. The essential requirements for sustainable development were poverty eradication, the promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development. They entailed sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, greater opportunities for all and the reduction of inequalities within and among countries, as well as sustainable finance, which itself called for a collective focus on how financial markets could be aligned with sustainable development, with particular attention to concrete ways of financing it. The ability of CARICOM countries to follow through on the 2030 Agenda was compromised by their high levels of debt in relation to their gross national product; as a region, they remained burdened by their small size and the extreme vulnerabilities of their economies, exacerbated by a lack of product and market diversification, natural disasters and climate change. In addition, the termination of correspondent banking relations could threaten their economic stability and their capacity to remain integrated in global financial, trade and economic systems.

37. The Samoa Pathway was the sustainable development blueprint for CARICOM, whose members appreciated the continued attention of the forum to the sustainable development needs of small island developing States. As many of the CARICOM States sought to develop an integrated approach to the Goals, high-quality, reliable and timely data and analysis were critical. She therefore reiterated the Community's call for dedicated support for strengthening national statistical systems and offices to improve the collection and disaggregation of data.

38. **Ms. Dieschbourg** (Luxembourg), Minister of the Environment, speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends for Children and Sustainable Development Goals, said that the Group continued to champion the rights of young people and to empower them as agents of change, both in international forums and in each country's action to achieve the Goals. Indeed, the Group's mission, as established when it had been formed during the negotiations on the Goals, had been to ensure that children's rights were an integral part of the 2030 Agenda; the members of the Group considered it important to act as long-term advocates for children's rights in that context, from the local to the global level. Their commitment to that cause was reflected in reports to the high-level political forum, which focused on national efforts to raise awareness of the Goals among children in schools, increase child and youth participation and invest in children in order to secure a more prosperous and sustainable future for all.

39. The theme of the current forum was particularly relevant to children, who suffered disproportionately from extreme poverty, with long-term consequences, including the maintenance of poverty for generations to come. Ending child poverty was a critical means of addressing the root causes of poverty and eliminating inter-generational poverty. Investing in children and youth was imperative for building the human capital required to turn demographic transitions into growth dividends. Children must also be made aware of the Goals since the transformation being sought needed first to take hold of people's minds and values; such awareness should guide their action to promote sustainable development in their communities and countries.

40. **Ms. Edillon** (Philippines), Undersecretary for Planning and Policy, National Economic and Development Authority, speaking on behalf of the Like-minded Group of Supporters of Middle-Income Countries, said that middle-income countries, which accounted for a large share of the world population and the global economy as well as more than 70 per cent of the world's poor, still faced significant challenges to achieve sustainable development. Their efforts to that end should be strengthened through exchanges of experience, improved coordination and focused support from all stakeholders, aligned with national development plans and strategies. The multiplier effect of such cooperation would benefit other middle-income countries, least developed countries and even developed countries.

41. As countries moved from a low-income to a middle-income level, a significant reduction was seen in international cooperation, thus limiting their ability to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. The Group therefore called for an open dialogue on development in transition and an approach that would foster sequenced, phased and gradual graduation policies. It called on the United Nations development system to address, within existing resources and

mandates, the specific challenges facing middle-income countries, as well as the most vulnerable countries. Methodologies needed to be devised to better cater to the complex and diverse realities of middle-income countries, reflecting the multidimensional nature of development and poverty.

42. **Mr. Alifei** (Chad), Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations, speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that poverty eradication was the core of the 2030 Agenda and the major challenge to achieving sustainable development. While global poverty rates had been lowered by 50 per cent since the launching of the Millennium Development Goals, increased efforts were needed in Africa to raise income levels and build the resilience of those still living in extreme poverty. African countries were also concerned about the gender wage gap, which produced huge annual losses in gross domestic product and affected the significant contribution made by women to the economic and social advancement of those countries. The African Union had accordingly declared 2016 "Africa Year of Human Rights with Particular Focus on the Rights of Women". In addition, investments needed to be made in Africa's youth, its greatest asset. In that spirit, the period 2018-2027 was to be proclaimed "African Decade for Technical, Professional and Entrepreneurial Training and Youth Employment".

43. Agriculture was the livelihood of nearly 70 per cent of Africans and accounted for one third of the continent's gross domestic product. Efforts to improve agricultural productivity could therefore stimulate demand in other economic sectors, thereby triggering economic growth and lifting millions out of poverty. The sustainable management of marine resources was also essential for poverty eradication, given that most of the poor depended on natural resources for their livelihood. At the same time, much remained to be done to ensure healthy living conditions for the population, in particular through universal health coverage and universal access to reliable, affordable and effective drugs and vaccines.

44. The key to economic growth and poverty eradication in Africa was infrastructure, industrialization and innovation, which required major investments. Indeed, the African Group considered industrialization the main strategy for diversifying and expanding growth and job creation, especially for the increasing proportion of young people entering the labour market each year.

45. **Ms. Gavrilescu** (Romania), Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, said that, because of the interlinkages between the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, actions to attain them were indivisible and produced multiple effects. They must therefore be tackled holistically, with a focus on synergies. The high-level political forum had a central role in the implementation of the Goals, while the United Nations Environment Assembly could be expected to advance their environmental dimension. Her country had contributed $50,000 to the budget of the 2017 session of the Environment Assembly, to help ensure the participation of delegates from developing countries; it would address the overarching theme of pollution. Romania was also collaborating with other European Union countries in the implementation of the new European Consensus on Development. Her Government attached importance to the regional dimension of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, reflected in the recent establishment by the pan-European region of an annual Regional Forum for Sustainable Development. Romania would present its voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in 2018.

46. **Mr. Telle** (Monaco), Minister of State and Head of Government, said that all the countries represented at the high-level forum were united by a determination to transform the world through the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In its pursuit of growth, his own country had long chosen the pathway of responsibility and solidarity, through its involvement in multilateral forums, its development assistance policy and its civil society initiatives. Nevertheless, more could and must be done, both within and outside Monaco. Moreover, the collective engagement in sustainable development was in everyone's interest since there could be no real prosperity or progress unless they were shared by the greatest number and built on sustainable bases. The hard-won freedoms that had gradually been extended to everyone were still not enough unless they went hand in hand with the principles of equity, solidarity and equality before the law, and solidarity itself was not enough if it was not accompanied by a broader sense of responsibility, towards the rest of the world, the environment and future generations. The international community was therefore called on to assume, individually and collectively, that imprescriptible and inalienable duty. Monaco, for its part and within its own limits, would fully rise to the challenge.

47. **Mr. Marlin** (Netherlands), Prime Minister of Sint Maarten, said that the key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals lay in each country's willingness to form national, regional and international

partnerships. For Sint Maarten, one of the four autonomous countries of the Netherlands, sustainability meant continuing to improve the quality of life of all its citizens while observing a number of core principles, including open government, accountability, social inclusion and equality. His Government had introduced measures to combat poverty and hunger, improve health-care policies and services, provide compulsory education and lifelong learning, raise educational levels to meet growing demand for skilled labour and offer affordable housing, particularly for young professionals. In its efforts to advance the well-being of the people of Sint Maarten, his Government remained firmly committed to achieving the Goals, which it was accordingly incorporating into its national development plans and policies.

48. **Mr. Vargas Maldonado** (Dominican Republic), Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that in the space of two years following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the international community had made palpable progress. The Latin America and Caribbean region was particularly engaged in that effort: it had held its first forum for sustainable development earlier in the year and accounted for 11 of the 44 countries that had presented voluntary national reviews to the current high-level forum. More than 15 inter-agency mechanisms for the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals had been established in the region, either using existing institutions or putting in place new ones, as in the Dominican Republic, where such a high-level inter-agency had been set up. Since 2012, his country had been following a national development strategy, as part of its national planning system, which had thereby been aligned with the 2030 Agenda. The Dominican National Statistics Office was playing a leadership role in that regard by monitoring the relevant indicators.

49. Huge challenges nevertheless remained, particularly for middle-income countries and small island developing countries like the Dominican Republic; their particular needs should therefore be taken into account. He called for action on commitments made to developing countries to help eradicate structural problems of poverty and inequality and assist in capacity-building. A strengthening of national data systems and review mechanisms was essential for the proper monitoring of the 2030 Agenda.

50. **Mr. Guzmán Ortiz** (Mexico), Chief of Staff of the Office of the President, said that the 2030 Agenda provided a basis for designing better public policy at the national and subnational levels; it was a guide and a benchmark for more effective development policies within each country that required the participation of all levels of government, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector. Accordingly, the recently-established National Council for the 2030 Agenda included all stakeholders and laid the foundations for action far into the future. At its inaugural meeting, commitments had been made to include in the federal budget information on programmes and resources relevant to each Sustainable Development Goal and to incorporate the principles of sustainable development into the country's long-term planning. The Mexican Senate had set up a commission to follow up the Agenda, a measure that was being matched by the National Conference of Governors and the 32 federal entities. His country's second voluntary national review, which it wished to present in 2018, would take those efforts as its starting point, including the commitment of its private sector to seek to advance the Goals relating to decent work, innovation and infrastructure, sustainable cities and responsible consumption and production. His Government believed that the 2030 Agenda should be at the core of every country's daily actions, as it was in Mexico, and proposed that the high-level political forum should take up other international agreements and commitments, put forward specific calls for action and set in motion a sharing of experiences and opportunities for cooperation.

51. **Ms. Molewa** (South Africa), Minister of Environmental Affairs, said that, owing to the different levels of development of countries, success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would be uneven and progress would be hampered by challenges. In her own country, the priority concerns of poverty, unemployment, inequality and sustainability were impacted by the global economic downturn, the changing climate and resource constraints due to the depletion of natural resources and environmental degradation. She therefore called on the United Nations system to provide the information, tools and expertise needed by countries for their development. ODA was also vital for the eradication of poverty in Africa, and illicit financial flows must be combated. The Council's forum on financing for development follow-up had an important role to play in that regard. In addition, food security and nutrition were essential for sustainable development and made it vital that all aspects of the Paris Agreement should be implemented and that nationally determined contributions to the global response to climate change should cover all loss and damage and not merely disaster risk management. It was also important to invest in research, development and infrastructure for science, technology, innovation and engineering and to seek, through

ecosystem approaches and partnerships among all stakeholders, to integrate the three economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

52. **Mr. Navickas** (Lithuania), Minister of the Environment, said that his Government had thoroughly evaluated the extent to which national policies were compliant with the Sustainable Development Goals. The review had revealed that challenges to effective realization of the Goals persisted in spite of the wide range of policy instruments and legislation currently in place. Long-term economic and social development actions set out in the Government's action plan for 2017-2020 included the revision of social allowances and pensions, the provision of financial incentives for young families and families with small children and improved access to medical care.

53. Lithuania was committed to implementing the Paris Agreement and taking steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. His country's policy on climate change mitigation was based on sustainably developing energy from renewable sources, the source of over half of electricity and heat production in Lithuania, and ensuring energy efficiency. Lithuania strove to ensure gender equality in all areas of life, thereby contributing to economic growth and enhanced standards of living through its implementation of Goal 5.

54. The monitoring of progress towards achieving the Goals was essential. To that end, his Government had begun collecting and analysing sustainable development data and had made over 50 per cent of sustainable development indicators publicly available nationwide. The action plan adopted by Lithuania for 2017 to 2019 encouraged public authorities to focus on development cooperation activities and emphasized its commitment to increase ODA, with a view to contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in partner countries. While each of the 17 Goals was vital, efforts to achieve them must be accompanied by efforts to promote peace, democracy and the rule of law within countries and societies.

55. **Mr. Pramudwinai** (Thailand), Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that over the previous three decades, there had been a marked decline in poverty, malnourishment and maternal and child mortality in his country, which the World Health Organization had recognized as the first country in Asia and the second country worldwide to eliminate the mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis. In spite of those significant achievements, Thailand rejected complacency and was pressing on towards realizing its vision of stability, prosperity and sustainability for all through a 20-year national strategy framework and its twelfth national economic and social development plan, based on his country's sufficiency economy philosophy. The philosophy, which advocated building development from the individual to the community and national levels, stressed resilience, prudence, moderation, knowledge, virtue and risk management.

56. Success in eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity would hinge on ensuring community engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals; promoting partnership in order to lift millions out of poverty; and heeding the voices of all members of society, including the most vulnerable, while also welcoming private sector contributions. His Government's public-private partnership policy scheme had witnessed the establishment of 76 social enterprises. Making use of the capacity of the private sector had helped to expand the market access of community products and improve their designs and packaging.

57. **Mr. Moir Sandoval** (Guatemala), Minister of Planning, said that the lessons learned from the attempt to achieve the Millennium Development Goals had guided his country along a new path to improved State planning of sustainable development efforts. The National Development Plan had been formulated in a collaborative manner, involving all sectors of society and integrating domestic and international development agendas. His Government's steps to align the National Development Plan with the 2030 Agenda, pursue results-based management and ensure accountability attested to its political will and commitment to sustainable human development within a rights-based framework.

58. **Ms. Smerkolj** (Slovenia), Minister without portfolio responsible for Development, Strategic Projects and Cohesion, said that with the world at a crossroads, Slovenia was determined to stay the course towards sustainable development as articulated in the 2030 Agenda, both at home and abroad. Her country placed women and children, social stability and the environment at the centre of its efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve comprehensive, sustainable development. Those efforts had made Slovenia one of the highest performing countries globally, according to the latest Sustainable Development Goals Index.

59. Her Government was working to foster collaboration among the business sector, science and the Government to integrate modern digital solutions into everyday life, with a view to making public services more accessible in an environmentally friendly manner. A circular economy, social innovation,

new concepts of green mobility and the sharing economy would contribute to changing consumption and production patterns in order to tackle challenges ranging from high youth unemployment to rapid population growth. Slovenian companies and the Government had jointly launched a project to deliver electricity-powered mobility to mass users. The initiative was expected to contribute to more affordable living through infrastructural and digital advances in the wider region. Through such innovations, Slovenia had the potential to become a standard-bearer for green mobility and help develop new technologies that would confront a host of environmental issues. Faced with the dilemma of how best to adapt to and make use of rapid technological change, humanity had no choice but to find ways to learn faster and govern smarter. To that end, the 2030 Agenda was driving the transformation of the world into a more sustainable, fair, peaceful and prosperous place.

60. **Mr. Brodjonegoro** (Indonesia), Minister of National Development Planning, said that measures to eradicate poverty and promote prosperity must aim to improve the quality of human resources and enhance opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, in an enabling environment characterized by gender equality and partnership. Despite the progress achieved by his country, whose poverty rate was decreasing, the pace had slowed in the previous three years as a result of multidimensional poverty, which required intervention beyond economic growth.

61. His Government was seriously tackling the issue of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, given the contribution that the sustainable use of marine resources and environmental protection could make to poverty eradication in an archipelagic nation. Indonesia was working to achieve inclusive implementation based on mutual trust, the participation of key sectors of society, transparency and accountability. Indonesia also stood ready to contribute to a strengthened global partnership for the means of implementation through its South-South and triangular cooperation programmes. Already equipped with the high-level political forum as the framework for coherent action and follow-up at the national, regional and global levels, deliberations among stakeholders must lead to tangible actions, and the forum must connect meaningfully with other international processes, with a view to supporting countries in their national implementation efforts.

62. **Mr. Jensen** (Denmark), Minister of Finance, said that his country would present its first voluntary national review to the high-level political forum that year; he encouraged countries that had not yet participated in the process, which was crucial for maintaining momentum in the global follow-up to the 2030 Agenda, to consider doing so. His Government's national action plan covered national and international follow-up on the Sustainable Development Goals, which constituted its platform for action on development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Despite new geopolitical challenges, countries must remain committed to the Paris Agreement in order to safeguard the future of the planet. The transition to climate-resilient, low-emission societies was irreversible. Denmark would continue to support its partners in developing countries and remained determined to maintain global leadership on the Paris Agreement.

63. Goal 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, with a particular focus on obstacles at all levels, was vital for global work in the field and crucial for achieving the remaining Goals. Denmark would continue to champion women's and girls' sexual and reproductive rights as fundamental human rights, including by disseminating information about every aspect of those rights in humanitarian and other settings. It would also persist in combating early forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and in promoting women's political and economic empowerment. Such efforts were high on the agenda in his country's candidacy for membership of the Human Rights Council for 2019 to 2021.

64. **Mr. Kargbo** (Sierra Leone), Minister of Finance and Economic Development, said that the greatest challenges facing his country were eradicating extreme poverty, a prevailing injustice and a serious threat to coexistence and national security, and minimizing multidimensional deprivations. The reduction of extreme poverty in Sierra Leone, from 31 per cent of the population in 2004 to 14 per cent in 2015, however laudable, still left 900,000 people in that situation. Poverty reduction interventions prioritized over the previous year included youth employment initiatives and conditional and unconditional cash transfer programmes. Moreover, his Government had extended social protection packages to citizens affected by war, with a special focus on war widows, war wounded, amputees and victims of sexual violence, and had provided massive assistance to survivors of the Ebola outbreak.

65. It was unacceptable that Sierra Leone should continue to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on importing food, as the country had enormous potential to meet its own consumption needs locally and to expand export opportunities. To that end, his Government was pursuing a "made in Sierra Leone"

agenda and had enacted a comprehensive public financial management bill to boost its domestic revenue position, in addition to scaling up the State's capacity to deliver services. As part of the effort to finance development domestically, the country's first toll road would begin operating in the near future.

66. In closing, he stressed that the role of partners was vital in curbing illicit financial flows from least developed countries, a heartrending loss for the African continent as a whole.

67. **Mr. Gyan-Baffour** (Ghana), Minister for Planning, said that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda had coincided with the second year of his country's medium-term plan for 2014 to 2017, and the first steps towards developing a long-term national development plan beyond the period covered by the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, as a member of the African Union, Ghana had also incorporated the first 10 years of Agenda 2063, which had been adopted by the African Union, into its national development agenda. In order to ensure full implementation of both major international development agendas, Ghana had outlined a three-pronged strategy of aligning the national and subnational authorities' development priorities with both agendas, adapting the targets of each agenda and incorporating them into the long-term national development plan, and also adopting some targets without any modification.

68. The medium-term policy framework for 2018 to 2021 was fully aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and with Agenda 2063 adopted by the African Union. Moving forward, it would be necessary to ensure that the plans were fully funded by budgetary allocations in order for annual budgets to be anchored to the Goals. For its part, his Government intended to put in place adequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, having assessed its readiness to monitor the Goals and having prepared a draft assessment report. As a member of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, Ghana had taken a number of measures to strengthen its data ecosystem. In an effort to broaden engagement, civil society organizations had been integrated into the governance structure for the achievement of the Goals.

69. **Mr. Darii** (Republic of Moldova), Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration, said that his Government had partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other stakeholders to adapt the Sustainable Development Goals to the local level. Under the auspices of the recently established National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development, Moldova had begun the implementation process, mapping the 169 global targets against national policies and strategies, with 107 of those targets having been considered particularly relevant for the country. Data ecosystem mapping to assess the availability of data and institutional monitoring capacity had helped to define country-specific indicators.

70. A new partnership framework for sustainable development concluded with UNDP for 2018 to 2022 would support reforms aimed at modernizing the Moldovan economy and society. The Moldova 2020 National Development Strategy was being evaluated in order to align it with the 2030 Agenda and other international commitments, enabling it to serve as an effective reform agenda that would maximize benefits for all, including the most vulnerable. Awareness-raising campaigns on sustainability had been organized throughout the country. His Government attached priority to gender equality and to the critical roles of infrastructure, industry and innovation in achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and poverty eradication. Pervasive disparities required immediate action in order to provide all human beings with equal opportunities to fulfil their aspirations.

71. **Mr. De Croo** (Belgium), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Development Cooperation, the Digital Agenda, Post and Telecommunications, said that his Government had launched the Belgian Sustainable Development Goals Charter to unite the private sector, civil society and the public sector around the Goals and international development; to date, more than 100 companies and organizations had endorsed that Charter. Building bridges between generations and encouraging youth involvement in the 2030 Agenda were equally vital. The challenges that persisted, particularly the unacceptably high number of people living in extreme poverty and countries still being left behind, underscored the reality that the Goals should be met for everyone, especially the most vulnerable. To that end, his country had undertaken to allocate at least half of its ODA to the least developed countries and fragile States and encouraged other donors to follow suit. ODA should be better used to leverage innovative sources of financing, including private investments, and more attention should be devoted to the quality of assistance, not just its quantity.

72. As a leader in promoting gender equality, Belgium was supporting the global effort to empower women and girls through the She Decides initiative it had helped launch, and had raised 181 million euros for that purpose at a conference earlier that year. Ranked twelfth worldwide on that year's Sustainable Development Goals Index, his country had made

inroads towards achieving sustainable development but could do more in such areas as environmental protection, promoting lifelong learning and combating obesity, as revealed in its first voluntary national review.

73. Belgium had taken note of the need to build more efficient tax collection systems and lift the tax exemption regimes still being granted to donors by their partner countries. Belgian statisticians were working to translate global and European Sustainable Development Goal indicators into national and subnational ones and were assisting other Governments through the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. His country had pioneered the concept of Digital for Development, currently a key component of the European Union's international development strategy. However, the United Nations system was in need of reform in order to make it fit for purpose in supporting the 2030 Agenda.

74. **Mr. Nyongolo** (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development, said that his country's vast territory of forests, hydrological and other resources was largely underutilized. His Government had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its strategic national development plan, taking into account the three dimensions of sustainable development. The challenge of financing for development was particularly acute for least developed countries such as his. A strengthened, effective technical and financial partnership, as outlined in Goal 17, was therefore of the essence.

75. Having signed the Paris Agreement in 2016, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had made considerable progress towards reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation under the REDD-plus initiative and was also actively involved in a partnership for resilient cities and renewable energy initiatives. His country's achievement of the Goals would be contingent upon finalizing its national development plan, ensuring that the commitments of financing entities were upheld, enhancing national statistical systems that could provide up-to-date and reliable data, and strengthening the capacities of various stakeholders in order to take ownership of the 2030 Agenda.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

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President: Mr. Barros Melet (Vice-President) ..... (Chile)

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Mr. Barros Melet (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*) (E/2017/33, E/2017/64, E/2017/66, E/2017/69 and E/2017/72)

(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*) (A/71/976-E/2017/79)

General debate (*continued*)

1. **The President** invited the ministerial meeting to resume its general debate on the theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world".

2. **Mr. Kamal** (Bangladesh), Minister of Planning, speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that the theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development was very timely, as the least developed countries were lagging behind in poverty eradication efforts, with more than 45 per cent of their population still living in extreme poverty. Current growth projections would leave nearly 35 per cent of their population in extreme poverty by 2030 if business as usual continued.

3. The Governments of least developed countries were adopting the necessary legislative, administrative and structural reforms to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, placing emphasis on financial inclusion for all, women's empowerment, high-quality education, capacity-building with regard to data, respect for human rights, and creating an enabling private sector environment. Nevertheless, huge financing gaps hindered the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; his delegation therefore called for the significant mobilization of resources, including through enhanced international cooperation.

4. The least developed countries faced the direst consequences of climate change although they had contributed the least to global warming; they therefore needed continued international cooperation to support climate actions. It was concerning that official development assistance (ODA), foreign direct investment (FDI) and exports, which were all important means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, had considerably declined in 2016. With a view to ensuring the full implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, all development partners must undertake concrete actions to reverse that declining trend and fulfil their commitment of providing 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national income to least developed countries, as stipulated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. International financial institutions were urged to provide special development assistance to least developed countries.

5. As technology and investment were key drivers of structural transformation in least developed countries, the Technology Bank must be operationalized and investment in least developed countries must be promoted. As some of the most vulnerable nations, least developed countries must continue to receive prioritized support from the United Nations to realize the 2030 Agenda as well as the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020. Although two years had elapsed since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, hardly any progress had been made. The high-level political forum must address the concerns of least developed countries in order for those countries to transform the global community and the face of sustainable development.

6. Every day, many people were dying as a result of crossing the seas to seek refuge in European countries; in 2016 alone, 5,000 individuals had died in that manner. If migrants could not be accommodated, they should not be allowed to board ships and face such dangers.

7. **Mr. Fakhoury** (Jordan), Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, said that a number of countries had demonstrated full ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals, sharing their impressive progress during the political forum. The main message stressed was that interconnectedness should pave the way for all future progress. Sectoral approaches no longer worked, as all Goals and countries were interconnected and faced the same challenges in terms of natural and man-made disasters, climate change, water shortages and epidemics. Success would depend on the recognition of a collective responsibility and the fostering of global partnerships.

8. Jordan was an example of how investing in human resources and development could translate into prosperity and welfare for all, as well as steady progress towards comprehensive sustainable development. For the past seven years, the country had set a model for the world by hosting Syrian refugees and providing them with all necessary public services,

despite the heavy financial, security, military and humanitarian costs consequently incurred.

9. The twenty-first century had seen a growth in prosperity, but poverty and youth unemployment still remained a problem, especially in low- and middle-income countries. In the Arab region, unprecedented instability, conflict and waves of refugees and displaced persons had unfortunately become the norm. The only way to overcome such challenges would be to work together towards global peace and security. The challenges faced by his country were immense, as the regional crises continued to threaten its hard-earned development gains and the influx of Syrian refugees had resulted in heightened needs, greater security and military pressures, increased budgetary costs, limited economic growth, higher public debt, declining exports and a loss of transit trade. Regional and global geopolitical and security developments were expected to continue to negatively affect investor confidence, tourism, exports, investment, and public finances, thereby threatening the country's path to sustainable development.

10. In spite of unprecedented challenges, Jordan was working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through comprehensive reforms aimed at maintaining resilience while increasing prosperity. The reforms focused on youth and women as key change agents for development. Political and economic reforms were proceeding confidently on parallel tracks.

11. Jordan faced great external challenges, owing to its geographic location within a volatile region. The development agenda was focused on shared prosperity and, in that regard, burden sharing could not continue to be disproportionate. Jordan was determined to safeguard its development achievements while remaining an inclusive, resilient safe haven and an oasis of stability.

12. **Mr. Barraza** (Chile), Minister of Social Development, said that the 2030 Agenda was the first universal and holistic global agenda and would thus require the altering of deeply rooted ideas and patterns of action. As the 2016 Human Development Report for Latin America and the Caribbean had noted, the Sustainable Development Goals were a concrete reminder that it was necessary to shift from focusing on economic growth and income, and examine instead the multiple dimensions that affected human development.

13. Given the equal importance of the three pillars of sustainable development established by the 2030 Agenda and the indivisible nature of the Goals, a new development paradigm and system of governance would be required. His Government believed that the fight against poverty was inseparable from the fight against inequality in its many forms. Moreover, combating inequality was not merely an ethical proposition, as scientific studies had shown that the economic growth of societies with greater levels of inequality was limited, stemming from the inability to tap into latent potential. Societies with higher levels of inequality also saw more social conflict, which discouraged foreign investment. Studies had also shown that economic growth was less effective at eradicating poverty in countries with high levels of inequality.

14. As the confluence of multiple forms of inequality and discrimination had been revealed to characterize intractable areas of poverty, it was as important to fight multidimensional poverty as it was to fight inequality. At the same time, and especially in middle-income countries, it was necessary to balance policies targeting the most vulnerable sectors with others that worked towards universalization in education, health and social security. Universalization was the guiding principle of all Chilean public policies, which aimed to ensure the social and democratic rule of law.

15. The holistic nature of the 2030 Agenda and the indivisibility of the Goals would require the effective intersectoral implementation of public policies; revaluating the role of planning and improving foresight capacities; and increasing national ownership of the 2030 Agenda by including the viewpoints of as many different actors as possible from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society and academia.

16. **Mr. Hernández Alcerro** (Honduras), Minister Coordinator General, said that the eradication of poverty and inequality and the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change were global challenges faced by the international community as a whole. The 2030 Agenda had redefined the way that development was understood. The Sustainable Development Goals must be aligned with national planning objectives and coordination mechanisms in order for international cooperation to be improved. The reform of the United Nations development system must focus more on people and less on processes, as the current architecture did not promote effective support to Member States. Reform was urgently needed to ensure that coordinated and coherent cooperation was aligned with national strategies.

17. The United Nations had repeatedly recognized that poverty was a multidimensional challenge that must be addressed accordingly. Both developing and developed nations must strive to work together to

collectively achieve the Goals. That was particularly important for countries that suffered from serious inequalities and the effects of climate change, particularly middle-income countries. ODA and access to concessional financing remained fundamental for such countries.

18. **Mr. Galletti** (Italy), Minister of Environment, Land and Sea Protection, said that the economic crisis of the previous decade had caused the absolute poverty rate in Italy to double. At its peak in 2012, almost 30 per cent of Italians had been at risk of poverty and social exclusion. To address such negative effects, his country had developed various initiatives to fight against poverty, in particular by allocating economic benefits to families and vulnerable persons.

19. Gender equality had been mainstreamed into national policies in a cross-cutting fashion, especially with a view to achieving full gender parity in employment. Universal health-care coverage was viewed as a moral and constitutional obligation, especially in the light of intensified migratory flows. Convinced that good health came from living in a healthy environment, initiatives had been adopted to reduce exposure to environmental risk factors.

20. In terms of sustainable development, his country believed that ensuring prosperity for all would require a new circular economic model that took into account full human potential and accounted for a more responsible use of natural resources.

21. Outlining various environmental programmes developed in relation to Sustainable Development Goal 14, he said that ensuring healthy oceans and seas was a priority for Italy, which was consequently honoured to be hosting the international summit "Water and Climate: Meeting of the Great Rivers of the World" in Rome in October 2017.

22. Cognizant of the fact that solidarity would be essential to help other Member States and partners to achieve the Goals, Italy had reformed its system of development cooperation to include all non-governmental actors and had drafted a new national strategy for sustainable development for the period 2017-2030 aligned with the priorities outlined in the 2030 Agenda. Cooperation at all levels would be essential to achieve sustainable development.

23. **Mr. Majeed** (Maldives), Minister of State for Environment and Energy, said that every Sustainable Development Goal carried significant weight for all nations. Recognizing the importance of the Goals, the Maldives had presented its voluntary national review during the 2017 session of the high-level political forum. The process of preparing a national review had been extremely useful, providing an impetus to take on a challenging task while bringing together governmental bodies to collectively review progress, as well as identify gaps. The national review process had also triggered a long-term development plan that would accelerate much of the country's work in other relevant frameworks.

24. The Maldives had demonstrated its willingness and ability to attain and surpass targets when it had achieved the Millennium Development Goals. However, the country faced intrinsic challenges such as geographic remoteness and insularity, as well as the detrimental impact of climate change. Moreover, it had limited resources and capacity to achieve the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals. Consequently, further progress would require significant support from development partners and the international community, including through South-South cooperation and partnerships aligned with the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

25. Support and capacity-building were required in several areas, including data collection and measurement, in order to obtain more accurate information and bring methodologies into line with the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. As the country's national review had generated momentum towards achieving the Goals, other States were urged to participate in that helpful process.

26. **Mr. Jayawickrama** Perera (Sri Lanka), Minister of Sustainable Development and Wildlife, said that the President of Sri Lanka had declared 2017 as the Year for Poverty Eradication, believing that eradicating poverty in all its forms across the nation was a prerequisite for a truly transformative era of sustainable development. With a view to becoming a high-income country, Sri Lanka had centred its national economic strategies on the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda. A knowledge-based social market economy built on social justice principles was being fostered with a focus on education, health, mobility and other key sectors. Strategies had been implemented to sustainably unlock the value of ocean resources and eliminate poisonous substances. More generally, Parliament had adopted a national sustainable development act to formulate policies and monitor the accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

27. By the end of 2017, the country planned to roll out a long-term sustainability vision, a national policy and strategy on sustainable development, a road map

on achieving the Goals, and a monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism defined by a national indicator and statistical framework. Sri Lanka would be in an ideal position to present its voluntary national review at the high-level political forum in 2018. The country would also host the fifth International Conference on Cities, People and Places in October 2017.

28. **Mr. Hikamatullozoda** (Tajikistan), Minister of Economic Development and Trade, said that the high-level political forum was the main mechanism within the United Nations system to monitor the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; it was a good platform for exchanging best practices among Member States and other stakeholders. Although much progress had been made in regard to poverty eradication, more than 767 million people remained in extreme poverty worldwide, and many of those who had escaped poverty were still in danger of falling back into it. The problems of growing inequality and a lack of access to quality education and basic medical insurance only aggravated that situation.

29. Over the past 15 years, Tajikistan had enjoyed significant successes in building a sovereign, democratic, law-based, secular and social State. The adoption of a variety of medium-term strategies had helped to reduce national poverty from 83 to 31 per cent. In 2016, the country had adopted a new development strategy for the period up to 2030 and was in the process of integrating the 2030 Agenda into that national strategy. Tajikistan had also prepared its voluntary national review and would present it later that day during the high-level political forum.

30. Nevertheless, the country's landlocked status, its seasonal lack of electrical energy, and its vulnerability to climate change-induced natural disasters were obstacles negatively impacting its achievement of the Goals. To overcome such challenges, financial resources must be mobilized from all sectors, including private sector investment and increased ODA. His delegation believed that the experiences and information shared during the forum would help with the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

31. **Mr. Mulusa** (Zambia), Minister of National Development Planning, said that eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity required innovative, responsive and inclusive approaches to development that left no one behind. Special attention must be paid to developing countries and countries in special situations where the world's poorest could be found. Hunger, poor health, gender inequality and social exclusion remained daunting challenges in many countries, including Zambia. It was necessary to build bilateral and multilateral partnerships between developing and developed countries to benefit the areas where development inadequacies were pervasive.

32. As a way of incorporating the 2030 Agenda into its national plans, Zambia had recently launched a national development plan for the period 2017-2021 that was focused on accelerating development efforts. The plan would be supported by enhanced frameworks for statistical monitoring and evaluation capacities, coupled with coordinated and diversified resource mobilization and partnerships.

33. Related measures included providing social assistance to vulnerable groups, reforming input delivery and distribution systems through an e-voucher system, enhancing productivity and technology development, and implementing programmes on farming, irrigation and early warning systems. Comprehensive legislative and policy frameworks had also been put in place to deal with various forms of discrimination, including violence against women and children.

34. Lastly, significant progress had been made in reducing child and maternal mortality as well as diseases, both communicable and non-communicable. However, non-communicable diseases and cervical cancer in particular continued to be a challenge.

35. **Mr. Belay** (Ethiopia), Minister of the National Planning Commission, said that although global poverty had been halved since 2000, an enhanced and revitalized global partnership would be necessary to fully eradicate poverty and achieve prosperity. The world faced multiple political, economic and environmental challenges that hindered the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other relevant instruments. Ethiopia welcomed the draft ministerial declaration of the high-level political forum and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

36. With a view to becoming a lower-middle-income country by 2025, Ethiopia had made considerable progress in economic growth, infrastructure, social development and environmental management over the previous 15 years. It had implemented pro-poor and pro-growth development policies that involved all development stakeholders, including persons with disabilities. Ethiopia had consequently achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals: it had halved poverty, significantly increased per capita income, improved social development, increased infrastructure connectivity and transformed its economy, seeing a rise in FDI. The country's significant progress had been underpinned by rapid, broad and sustained economic

growth, making Ethiopia one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

37. Ethiopia had been the beneficiary of both North-South and South-South cooperation; its experience was consequently a good illustration of how those forms of cooperation could be complementary. However, poverty, climate change-induced drought, deficits and challenges in good governance and a weak export sector remained the country's principal development challenges. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, Ethiopia would need international solidarity and global partnerships. Through effective multilateralism, the international community must translate its commitments to the 2030 Agenda and other relevant instruments into action by providing nationally aligned financial and technological support to developing countries and least developed countries in particular.

38. **Mr. Tsogwane** (Botswana), Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, said that the right to development was a right for all. No one should be left behind in the pursuit of sustainable development. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda had raised expectations with regard to the challenges of sluggish economic growth, economic diversification, poverty, job creation, and the empowerment of women and young people.

39. Encouraging progress had been made but the international community still needed to address the needs of millions living in abject poverty. For them, the right to development remained a dream. Urgent action was therefore required, especially to unlock the means of implementation mentioned in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

40. His country had mainstreamed the Sustainable Development Goals into its eleventh National Development Plan and Vision 2036. Its empowerment programmes were inclusive of all the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society. Structures and mechanisms were in place to review, monitor and evaluate the implementation of those programmes. As a result, it had been found that there was a need for mechanisms to facilitate synergy, information sharing and coordination between entities in order to avoid a counterproductive silo approach.

41. Botswana was among the 44 countries that would share their experience of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as part of the voluntary national review process, based on comprehensive consultations and awareness-raising workshops involving stakeholders at the district and national levels. His Government had found that sustainable development required a people-centred, democratic, transparent and inclusive approach.

42. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda would also require public-private partnerships and partnerships with civil society and the United Nations system. Such partnerships required reliable statistical data, which in turn required national statistical offices with a strengthened institutional and technical capacity. Statistics Botswana, the national statistics body, had been effective in providing reliable data in support of the national development planning process, and had been co-opted by the United Nations Statistical Commission to help develop the indicator framework for the 2030 Agenda.

43. **Mr. Dahlan** (Malaysia), Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, said that his country's development agenda had always been people-focused and aligned with the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals. The theme of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan, 2016-2020 was "anchoring growth on people". The Plan continued the Government's focus on balancing the needs of the people economy and the capital economy. Its six strategic thrusts, which mirrored the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, involved enhancing inclusiveness; improving well-being for all; accelerating human capital development; pursuing green growth; strengthening infrastructure; and re-engineering economic growth.

44. His Government had taken steps to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the national context. A governance structure had been established in 2016 to monitor and report on the Goals, and a national roadmap was being finalized and would be the main reference for achieving the Goals in Malaysia.

45. Malaysia was one of the few countries that had rapidly achieved the Millennium Development Goals by halving poverty from 16.5 per cent in 1990 to 8.5 per cent in 2000. By 2014, the incidence of poverty had dropped to 0.6 per cent. The number of people living below the food poverty line amounted to only 0.2 per cent. Those advances had been achieved by providing access to education and skills development for all sectors of society, creating employment, supporting entrepreneurship, facilitating participation in unit trusts and investment schemes, and providing basic infrastructure. The measurement of poverty had now been expanded beyond income through a Malaysian version of the Multidimensional Poverty Index that took account of other dimensions of poverty such as education, health and quality of life.

46. His country would seek to double the mean monthly income of the bottom 40 per cent of

households by 2020 by enhancing their access to education, increasing their productivity through information and communications technology, promoting social-based enterprises and attracting investment to rural and low-income areas.

47. Women had an important role to play in community and economic development. The national policy on women guaranteed equal status and the same fundamental rights as men, as enshrined in the Constitution. A plan of action for the advancement of women would operationalize that policy and further integrate women into development while raising their social status. Malaysia had made significant progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in partnership with non-governmental and civil society organizations.

48. **Mr. Abela** (Malta), Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, said that images of war, poverty and disease could easily lead to pessimism about sustainable development, but it was also easy to forget how much good was being done on a daily basis because development did not make headlines. Inequality and instability persisted, and millions had been forced to flee armed conflict, but there was reason to be optimistic as the world came together to fight poverty in unprecedented ways.

49. During the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union, real progress had been made on a range of development issues. Along with other States members of the European Union, Malta had worked towards the adoption of a new European Consensus on Development that reflected the global development agenda and represented a shared vision and plan of action for the eradication of poverty. The Consensus reflected the commitments made in 2015 and 2016, and provided all States members of the European Union with a single development policy. At the core of the Consensus were a number of cross-cutting issues that could create synergies between the Sustainable Development Goals and accelerate the transformation of economies and societies. For the first time, young people were at the core of development policy owing to their potential to drive innovation and entrepreneurship. There was also a focus on women and girls, who had the potential to act as change agents.

50. True development required progress in areas including governance, human rights and the rule of law. The high-level political forum was a reminder that a continued focus on development cooperation was needed. In addition to investments in ODA, Governments needed to form new partnerships with global financial institutions and the private sector. The forum, with its central role in the institutional framework of sustainable development, provided an opportunity to share experiences, challenges and lessons learned with the common aim of optimizing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

51. **Mr. Dlamini** (Swaziland), Minister of Economic Planning and Development, said that his country had made progress in aligning its domestic policies with the essential elements required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

52. In Swaziland, a small, vulnerable and landlocked developing country, the resources needed to accomplish the Goals continued to be a challenge. Regarding Goal 1, the Government had launched several initiatives that prioritized less privileged groups. Social security programmes currently covered orphaned and vulnerable children, children with disabilities and the elderly, among others. Every school-age child had the opportunity to attend school, especially at the primary education level. The main challenge was to sustain those initiatives in spite of the fiscal difficulties facing the country and the difficulty of identifying and targeting beneficiaries.

53. The health of a nation was the basis for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Accordingly, his Government had established a number of programmes to scale up progress towards achieving the Goals. The main challenge was to ensure that the programmes reached all areas. His Government had also prioritized the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment and a national strategy for combating the abuse of women and girls had been approved in 2016. A number of laws had also been amended to align them with the objectives of gender-related acts and policies and ensure that disadvantaged groups, and women in particular, received equal treatment.

54. To address drought-related challenges, his Government had invested in the construction of earth dams to ensure an adequate supply of water for domestic and agricultural use. The current challenge was the inconsistent availability of water.

55. **Mr. Murad** (Afghanistan), Minister of Economy, said that his country had adopted the Millennium Development Goals almost five years after the Millennium Declaration and after having suffered from decades of conflict. The results of its subsequent socioeconomic development were striking. In 2002, fewer than 900,000 students were enrolled in education and none of them were girls. Currently, that number was 9 million and girls made up 40 per cent of students. Access to health services within two hours'

travel time had risen from 9 per cent to 87 per cent, life expectancy at birth had risen from 42 years to 64 years, and infant mortality had declined from 66 per thousand live births in 2005 to the current figure of 45. Furthermore, women were present at every level of government, parliament, civil society, the private sector and the media. Those achievements were shared by Afghanistan and the international community, which were bound together by a spirit of genuine partnership.

56. The process of nationalizing the Sustainable Development Goals had started with the formation of a national coordination committee consisting of ministers and deputy ministers under the supervision of the Council of Ministers. Following a series of national consultations, conferences and planning workshops involving governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, the national targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals had been incorporated into the national peace and development framework covering security, education, health care, governance, infrastructure, social protection, agricultural and rural development, and the economy. All targets, indicators and baselines had been tailored to the realities of Afghanistan.

57. At the subnational level, a human rights-based implementation plan was being developed to ensure that all people, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, were the focus of his Government's efforts. For that purpose, an executive committee on the Sustainable Development Goals had been established to support and strengthen the Ministry of the Economy as the lead governmental institution responsible for cross-sectoral coordination, localization and alignment. The Afghan people were resilient and the Government was committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and making them part of the national discourse.

58. **Ms. Đukić-Dejanović** (Serbia), Minister without portfolio in charge of population policy/Government, said that the high-level political forum was key to monitoring the fulfilment of the obligations of Member States for the benefit of generations to come. The prevention of climate change was a goal in itself but also cut across all the other Sustainable Development Goals. Serbia had ratified the Paris Agreement in May 2017. Her Government had also established a working group made up of representatives of relevant ministries, offices and agencies to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Representatives of civil society, academia and the private sector had also contributed to the work of the group.

59. Voluntary national reviews were very important for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda since they made it possible to exchange experiences, identify best practices and address challenges at all levels. The submission of reports on global sustainable development every four years was also very important and her Government would submit its first report in 2019. The national development priorities for Serbia in the period from 2016 to 2020 were the negotiations on accession to the European Union and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with the aim of promoting good governance and the rule of law, developing social and human resources, achieving economic development, growth and employment, controlling climate change, building resilient communities and integrating culture into the sustainable development process.

60. After years of multiple challenges, her country was on the road to fiscal stability and dynamic growth followed by comprehensive structural reforms. Growth and development must be sustainable, especially with a view to environmental protection, poverty eradication, gender equality and an end to violence against women and girls. Her Government would prioritize the achievement of peaceful inclusive societies since peace was a prerequisite for development.

61. **Mr. Al-Nabit** (Qatar), Minister of Development Planning and Statistics, said that poverty eradication was a prerequisite for sustainable development. Achieving inclusive socioeconomic growth required mobilizing sufficient resources and establishing effective international partnerships. International cooperation for development should prioritize the poorest and most marginalized. Financing should be approached in a spirit of international solidarity and partnership. In November 2017, Qatar would host a high-level meeting in the run-up to the Council's forum on financing for development follow-up in 2018, and had adopted a policy based on the linkages between national policies and international development trends. The 2030 Agenda had been integrated into the second development strategy for the period from 2017 to 2022.

62. The national vision of Qatar for 2030 identified socioeconomic, human and environmental objectives. Successes had been achieved in such areas as social protection, energy, health, education, infrastructure, environmental protection, international cooperation and partnerships, and development assistance with a focus on human rights. His country was home to nationals of various countries who enjoyed fundamental rights in accordance with the Constitution and participated in development policies and State policies. It had also adopted a preventive policy under

which conditions were conducive to coexistence and the rejection of violence. Annual conferences were held to promote intercultural dialogue.

63. Qatar was facing unilateral measures imposing an illegal land, sea and air embargo. Its response had been to adopt a legal approach based on international law and it was grateful for the assistance of its friends. Those measures would not deter his country from implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving sustainable development and prosperity for its citizens. According to international indicators, Qatar had achieved significant development and would pursue assistance to the most vulnerable around the world as part of an international partnership. Its efforts to achieve sustainable development would continue to take into account economic, environmental and social factors.

64. **Mr. Zarif** (Islamic Republic of Iran), Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that poverty continued to be the greatest contemporary challenge, a real threat to humankind and a major obstacle to sustainable development. Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in his country, a strong legal and legislative framework had been created. It provided a solid platform for the planning, implementation and follow-up of national development strategies and policies. Significant achievements had been made in spite of external challenges such as aggression by Iraq and the imposition of sanctions by the United States.

65. Voluntary national reviews were an opportunity to share best practices, experiences and achievements in building a resilient economy, eradicating poverty, guaranteeing social justice and food security, expanding basic services for all, empowering women and girls, promoting technology and innovation, and protecting the environment, natural resources and biodiversity.

66. In the experience of the Islamic Republic of Iran and many other countries, a conducive external environment was important. Developed countries should fulfil their commitments to provide financial resources, transfer technology and build capacity without politicizing those processes. The United Nations had a pivotal role to play in enhancing cooperation at the international and regional levels.

67. West Asia continued to be affected by wars and domestic conflicts that dragged millions into abject poverty, which was one of the consequences and causes of insecurity that therefore needed to be addressed. Foreign occupation, wars and the interventionist policies of external Powers had stripped the citizens of the region not only of wealth and natural resources but also of dignity and freedom. Exploiting the existing despair, terrorists with a Takfirist ideology, supported by outside and regional actors, had infested West Asia and the world and committed unspeakable atrocities. The situations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen were the worst examples of humanitarian catastrophes. Leaving no one behind, in such miserable conditions, would be a challenge.

68. Development challenges also provided opportunities for cooperation with partners who were willing to address such common and immediate challenges as poverty eradication and environmental protection. His country's policy of constructive engagement had already led to the end of an unnecessary global crisis following the conclusion of a historic nuclear deal, the joint comprehensive plan of action. Such an outstanding success for diplomacy and multilateralism promised new horizons for dialogue, understanding, mutual respect and cooperation in other fields, including at the regional level.

69. **Ms. Ismail** (Egypt), Minister of Social Solidarity, said that, in the two years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Member States had prepared implementation strategies, established coordination, follow-up and review mechanisms, and started to measure the progress made. The eradication of poverty remained the greatest challenge and was the touchstone for the Sustainable Development Goals.

70. Egypt had been among the first group of countries that had presented a voluntary national review to the high-level political forum and was currently implementing the four pillars of its national development strategy, namely economic development, social justice, the environment, and knowledge and innovation. Better ways of working together had been found and best practices had been developed across a wide range of country experiences, in recognition of the singular importance of the global partnership for sustainable development, of national ownership, and of leaving no one behind.

71. One challenge was to ensure that the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda were sufficient. There was an urgent need for a transition from billions to trillions in the form of ODA, FDI, public and private resources, and domestic resource mobilization. The growing body of knowledge and experience should be tailored to the specific needs of different countries, and national capacities should be boosted, especially in the areas of budget allocation, data collection and analysis, monitoring and reporting.

72. There was no one-size-fits-all approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Various global forums, of which the high-level political forum was the pinnacle, would remain key to sharing experiences and exchanging lessons learned. There should also be sufficient policy space for a tailored approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Shared contributions were important since different countries and civil society had an asymmetrical ability to contribute. A results-based approach to national planning efforts should have the full participation of all stakeholders including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Governments and the private sector.

73. Countries affected by conflict or terrorism sponsored by regimes in the region paid a multidimensional price in the form of poverty and vulnerability as financial resources were diverted and development efforts were undermined. Instead, they needed stability, security and peace to be able to implement the 2030 Agenda.

74. The high-level political forum played an important role as a laboratory for sustainable development and Egypt would remain actively engaged in collective efforts to promote that vision of the 2030 Agenda.

75. **Mr. Molinas** (Paraguay), Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of Technical Planning of Economic and Social Development, said that a broad consultation process had taken place in his country in support of the 2030 Agenda. Social leaders, entrepreneurs, academics, cultural leaders, leaders of NGOs and representatives from all levels of government had expressed their aspirations in a national development plan, 92 per cent of which was aligned with the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. In that context, his country had an innovative and participatory institutional architecture including an inter-institutional commission on the Goals; a national country strategy team advising the executive branch; a result-based budgeting system linking the national budget to the targets of the Goals; a citizen's monitoring board informing citizens of monthly advances towards the social targets; and a project on localizing the Goals through participatory municipal plans and municipal development councils. A joint declaration would soon be signed by all three branches of the State, which would join forces and ratify the commitment to the Goals.

76. The "Paraguay 2030" plan for operationalizing the Goals had three pillars, namely poverty reduction and social development; inclusive economic growth; and the integration of Paraguay into the global economy. It also had four cross-cutting themes: equal opportunities and women's empowerment; efficient and transparent governance; development and land-use planning; and environmental sustainability, including a commitment to the Paris Agreement.

77. **Ms. Sánchez Oviedo** (Costa Rica), Minister of Planning and Economic Policy, said that the comprehensive, universal and multidimensional nature of the Sustainable Development Goals required innovative public policies. It was the responsibility of States and Governments to leave no one behind by building consensus, creating synergies and securing participation and commitment by multiple actors.

78. On 9 September 2016, Costa Rica had become the first country to establish a national pact for the achievement of the Goals. The pact brought together the three branches of government, the business sector, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, academia, community organizations and local governments. The pact was politically important because it set priorities that transcended governing political circles and promoted accountability; put in place a complex governance system of checks and balances; created spaces for dialogue and accountability; and built trust among actors with different interests and priorities. As a result, the pact had amounted to an unprecedented political advance and turned the Goals into the basis for building a vision for the future.

79. The implementation process had led to the design and use of the Multidimensional Poverty Index as a tool to reorganize social policy and align poverty reduction policy with 14 of the Goals. As a result, measurement instruments had improved, resource allocation was more efficient, intersectoral coordination had been refined and capacities for the monitoring and evaluation of results had been enhanced.

80. The voluntary review had identified advances but also some structural gaps, especially in the areas of employment, innovation, gender equality, infrastructure and taxation. Strategies financed by domestic resource mobilization were being implemented to address those gaps, but international cooperation continued to be a strategic tool for reducing and eliminating structural gaps, especially in middle-income countries. Because the Sustainable Development Goals were designed as both national and global targets, the nature and scope of international development cooperation had to be redimensioned. The Goals symbolized hopes for a more equitable world and a more just society. Only through multilateralism

and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda would the international community find solutions to global problems.

81. **Mr. Rakotomamonjy** (Madagascar), President of the National Assembly, said that the steady decline in ODA was especially threatening for Madagascar because it was reportedly attributable to a decline in support from bilateral partners, decentralized cooperation projects, and international NGOs. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development had declared that Madagascar was one of 51 countries neglected by aid and those countries relied heavily on foreign partnerships to support them in addressing the challenges of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

82. The national development plan of Madagascar included a reform strategy and an investment programme that prioritized employment- and income-generating sectors. Financing for that strategy was announced in the wake of a conference of donors and investors in December 2016, but some of the financial support had not been released. There should also be an equitable distribution of assistance among countries that needed it.

83. His Government was implementing a domestic resource mobilization strategy involving sectoral policies and institutional reforms that promoted savings, stimulated the contributions of the diaspora to development, and boosted investment and public-private partnerships.

84. Given its local challenges of climate change and poverty eradication as well as its economic size and sociopolitical context, Madagascar had had to make greater efforts, beyond what it could afford, to keep up with the global calendar of the 2030 Agenda. The country had taken ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals and had the potential to keep pace with the rest of the world in achieving the expected Goals. However, without partnerships and inclusive support from all global stakeholders, its local and national plans would continue to disappoint. The international community should therefore provide the support needed to translate the common commitments into reality through a combination of the capacities of all parties.

85. **Mr. Timbine** (Mali), First Vice-President of the National Assembly, said that, since 2012, his country had been facing a multidimensional crisis whose root causes were linked to the issues of poverty and development. Given that there could be no lasting peace and stability without development or hope for the future, his Government was working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 with support from its technical and financial partners in order to implement development projects that would have a rapid impact on the most vulnerable areas of the country. It was also working to provide basic social services and create income-generating opportunities for the population, especially refugees and internally displaced persons returning home. As those projects were important for the stability of Mali, he invited friendly countries and partner international organizations, pursuant to their commitments, to contribute to the effective implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali from the Algiers Process.

86. Furthermore, the Government had developed the Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development for the period 2016-2018, which was the medium-term reference point for the design, implementation and monitoring of strategic development policies. The Framework was intended to promote inclusive and sustainable development that would reduce poverty and inequality in a peaceful and united Mali and make it possible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The Framework was being operationalized by means of a set of priority actions; a performance measurement system based on relevant indicators; and a participatory follow-up and evaluation mechanism. Meanwhile, the "Jigisemejiri" Safety Nets Project, supported by the World Bank Group, provided cash transfers to poor households facing food insecurity. Over 60,000 households had benefited by 30 September 2016 and it was hoped that that number would rise to over 91,000 by the end of 2019.

87. Gender equality was a prerequisite for poverty eradication and prosperity. Accordingly, the National Assembly had adopted an act on promoting gender equality in access to appointed and elected positions. Whereas 8 per cent of councillors were women in 2009, 27.5 per cent of elected officials were women in 2016.

88. Other important measures taken included the national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); unrelenting efforts to combat violence against women, including female genital mutilation and early marriage for girls; and the empowerment of rural women.

89. **Ms. Shchetkina** (Belarus), Deputy Chair of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly, said that the high-level political forum was a unique platform for sharing information and experience concerning the achievement of the Sustainable

Development Goals and that Belarus was committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Accordingly, the President of Belarus had established a national coordinator for the Goals who was also in charge of the Sustainable Development Council, which would carry out the vertical and horizontal coordination tasks related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and would set up a mechanism for parliamentary hearings and consultations with a broad range of partners, including civil society.

90. In conjunction with United Nations agencies, her Government was raising public awareness about the Goals, particularly through youth and educational programmes. Having already presented its voluntary national review to the high-level political forum, Belarus looked forward to hearing about the best practices of other countries and regions.

91. In view of the importance of international aid, the United Nations must serve as a clearing house for the provision of such assistance. Indeed, the ambitious Goals would only be achieved with the proper integration and coordination. As a middle-income country, Belarus called in particular for more coordinated development assistance to that category of countries, which still required support for their sustainable development. The United Nations should therefore adopt a specific action plan for middle-income countries, as it had for other categories of developing country, and also draw up criteria that transcended per capita income.

92. Regional entities provided a significant nexus for work at the national and global levels. As an active participant in a range of regional integration processes, Belarus considered that regional processes must be strengthened and harmonized in order to avoid overlaps and ensure complementarity. In that context, broader use should be made of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to discuss cooperation among regional integration associations. Mutually beneficial cooperation among such associations in Eurasia was extremely important for global political stability and prosperity.

93. Despite their differences, countries must learn to trust each other and to work together for the benefit of their peoples and the planet rather than for political and financial elites. The Goals must not be used as bargaining chips in political games; instead, countries should consistently support each other's efforts to achieve the Goals. Only together would countries be able to deal with the emerging challenges and threats on the path towards achieving the 2030 Agenda.

94. **Mr. Panagariya** (India), Vice Chairperson of the National Institution for Transforming India, said that since the previous meeting of the high-level political forum, his Government had strengthened the national institutional framework for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The National Institution for Transforming India had determined which government ministries and initiatives should address each of the Goals and targets. It had also drafted a plan for accelerating achievement of the country's national development goals, which were reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals. At the state and subregional levels, chief ministers had incorporated the 2030 Agenda into their local development strategies, and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation had developed a set of national indicators for monitoring progress towards the Goals.

95. As the fastest-growing economy in the world, India had succeeded in halving the number of persons in poverty since 1993, through employment creation and large-scale poverty eradication programmes. Programmes in areas such as housing and food security were helping to rapidly transform the country, and progressive legislation like the Maternity Benefit Programme were contributing to the reduction of gender inequality. His Government's commitment to protecting the environment was evidenced by the intended nationally determined commitments that it had submitted under the Paris Agreement. To mobilize domestic resources the Government had recently introduced a new tax on goods and services. Developed countries must make good on their development support commitments. India was committed to cooperating with other developing countries, particularly in Africa.

96. **Mr. Shrestha** (Nepal), Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission, said that in Nepal the 2030 Agenda was underpinned by the rights-based Constitution, which guaranteed rights related to various areas of development, including health, education and the environment. His Government's current development priority was to build on the progress made under the Millennium Development Goals and to focus on fully realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, which had been mainstreamed into its national development agenda. First, however, challenges related to capacity, institutions and resources must be addressed.

97. The path to development for Nepal was beset with structural challenges, such as its landlocked status and vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. His Government was making every effort to overcome those hurdles, but it would not be able to do

so alone. The 2030 Agenda called for international partnerships to fill gaps in technological capacity and resources. The international community should support the least developed countries and the landlocked developing countries to fully realize their potential by following through on commitments related to means of implementation and by ensuring equitable benefits from international trade and financial systems. All stakeholders needed to support the efforts of countries in special situations in a spirit of solidarity, which was the foundation of the 2030 Agenda.

98. System-wide coherence was needed across the United Nations so that it would be able to deliver as one on the ground. Global efforts and partnerships remained inadequate. Nepal was committed to developing extensive domestic partnerships, but it also hoped to benefit from ODA, meaningful partnerships and technology transfers. The high-level political forum had an important responsibility to guarantee that efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda were sustained, and to maintain political leadership to ensure that no one was left behind.

99. **Mr. Chhieng** (Cambodia), Minister attached to the Prime Minister and Secretary-General of the Cambodian Rehabilitation Development Board, said that with over two decades of growth and poverty reduction, Cambodia was among the countries that had made the most progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. His Government was working to localize and sequence implementation of the global agenda, and was adding its own goal on mine clearance.

100. In order to achieve the Goals, Cambodia needed to reduce poverty and strengthen inclusive growth, including through transformation of the rural economy; increase its competitiveness and develop human resources; and address the challenges posed by migration, urbanization and climate change. All that required stronger institutions and a reduction in inequality and exclusion. The challenges Cambodia faced were important and merited discussion at further high-level meetings.

101. Increased investment was needed to improve monitoring systems and capacities. Better data on the poorest and most vulnerable in society, and on the dynamics of exclusion, were needed to inform policy interventions. A recent assessment of the country's medium-term development finances showed that the bulk of the costs of implementation of the 2030 Agenda could be covered with domestic resources, but that partnerships with development actors were also essential. In that connection, a more dedicated effort to advance the Addis Ababa Action Agenda was required.

102. **Ms. Chazama** (Malawi), Minister of Civic Education and Community Development, said that, as the Human Development Index for Malawi showed, between 1990 and 2015 the quality of life in the country had improved. The President of Malawi had vowed to harness the efforts of all stakeholders to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. To support achievement of the Goals, the President had implemented public sector reforms aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. The three pillars of patriotism, integrity and hard work had underpinned the reforms, and would be the basis of all future development activities undertaken.

103. Her Government had produced a baseline report containing data on 137 indicators to enable progress towards the Goals to be measured. It was in the process of drafting the new Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III, which would replace the current development strategy and would be in effect until 2020. Key performance indicators for the new strategy were being aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

104. Recognizing that progress towards the Goals required rural poverty reduction, her Government was working to strengthen rural communities economically through cash transfer programmes, the construction of better roads to facilitate the transport of agricultural produce, the provision of cement and iron subsidies to enable poor people to build sturdy and affordable houses, and the granting of subsidies to smallholder farmers. Those actions were carried out in coordination with development partners, NGOs and the private sector.

105. **Mr. Kwieciński** (Poland), Secretary of State at the Ministry of Economic Development, said that in order to achieve sustainable development, the world would need to elaborate integrated solutions based on new models of production and consumption. Although there was no single recipe for success, States and Governments must take the lead by generating incentives for the creation of an innovative and sustainable economy.

106. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals were a global road map as well as a mechanism for effective cooperation with other countries. Poland had adopted a medium-term strategy for responsible development that was people-centred and designed to ensure that all social groups could enjoy the benefits of economic growth and progress.

High levels of employment, good quality workplaces and expanded entrepreneurship, including in small towns and rural areas, were among the strategy's targets. Such objectives could be achieved through investment, innovation, the harnessing of the digital revolution and the foreign expansion of Polish businesses. The strategy also included measures that would strengthen human and social capital, build adequate transport and communications infrastructures, and work towards the sustainable management of resources. The full implementation of the strategy would reduce social exclusion and poverty, improve quality of life, increase employment and access to health care and enhance education programmes.

107. Poland had created a Sustainable Development Goal partnership in June 2017, which had been joined by almost 50 businesses and organizations. It planned to set up a multi-stakeholder forum for the exchange of information.

108. **Mr. Nguyen** The Phuong (Viet Nam), Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Planning and Investment, said that in May 2017 his Government had issued a National Action Plan for implementing the 2030 Agenda, following extensive consultations with United Nations agencies, international partners and other stakeholders. Having reviewed the 232 indicators established by the United Nations Statistical Commission, his Government had determined that 129 of them were feasible for Viet Nam. The Government was also preparing its voluntary national review for presentation at the 2018 high-level political forum.

109. Although his Government was committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which were critical in such areas as poverty eradication, social security, environmental protection, climate change mitigation and the promotion of prosperity, implementation posed major challenges: financial resources were insufficient, owing to decreased ODA, and Viet Nam had limited capacity for monitoring and evaluation, especially for managing statistical data. The National Action Plan called for the mobilization of domestic resources and the active participation of all stakeholders. However, in addition to national endeavours, Viet Nam needed financial and non-financial support from external stakeholders, including in the areas of employment, health, education, economic development, the environment, and reduction of inequality in incomes and living conditions.

110. At the global level, successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda depended on maintaining peace and security by upholding international law, intensifying development cooperation among nations, strengthening global partnerships, fostering multi-stakeholder participation and sharing knowledge, experience, technology and finance.

111. **Ms. Edillon** (Philippines), Undersecretary of the National Economic Development Authority, said that the Philippines had been among the first countries to present a voluntary national review in relation to the 2030 Agenda. The Government had taken stock of the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals, but a different approach was required for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which was predicated on sustainable development and leaving no one behind. To achieve that long-term vision, it might be necessary to limit current economic growth in order to prevent adverse social and environmental impacts that would imperil future growth. Furthermore, if no one was to be left behind, people might have to moderate their expectations so that the needs of others could be met.

112. In order to determine the collective long-term aspirations of Filipinos, her Government had convened focus groups and conducted a nationwide survey, whose results had been used to construct a development agenda for the period up to 2040. The agenda was designed to bring about four major changes, namely, the Philippines would have a prosperous, smart and innovative society, people would live long and healthy lives, and there would be a high level of trust. Those goals would underpin the next four medium-term Philippine Development Plans, starting with the current one. All the Sustainable Development Goals were integrated into the current Philippine Development Plan.

113. In future, the high-level political forum should have more balanced reporting by Member States, on the one hand, and by development partners and the United Nations system in particular, on the other. A number of targets in the Sustainable Development Goals required international cooperation, such as Goal 2, which called for increased investment in technology development and plant and livestock gene banks. Development partners might produce a long-term implementation plan to meet the Goals, and provide periodic updates on progress. Moreover, as all the Goals were interlinked, it was necessary to begin systematic work on Goal 17 without delay.

114. **Mr. Savaaphet** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Vice Minister of the Ministry of Planning and Investment, said that his Government had worked closely with the United Nations country team in adapting the Sustainable Development Goals to

national realities. The country's 2016-2020 socioeconomic development plan had served as the main entry point for integrating Goal targets into national planning. Many of the plan's indicators were linked to Goal indicators, focusing especially on eradicating poverty and hunger, ensuring healthy and productive lives and creating enabling conditions for development. His country had also adopted its own Sustainable Development Goal 18: Lives saved from unexploded ordnances.

115. A number of national initiatives also focused on tackling economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities, which must be overcome in order for the country to graduate from least developed country status. Forging inclusive partnerships was a means to achieve the Goals and to implement the national agenda. His Government was finalizing its indicators and road map for the Goals and was also focusing on awareness-raising, multi-stakeholder partnerships, monitoring and evaluation, reporting and budgeting. The Lao People's Democratic Republic would present its voluntary national review at the 2018 high-level political forum.

116. **Mr. Brun** (Norway), Director of the Section for Development Policy, said that success in achieving the 2030 Agenda would hinge on consistent and accountable follow-up by all stakeholders. Over the last decade, the world had seen a substantial decline in the number of people living in abject poverty, largely owing to the initiative taken by a number of countries to address extreme poverty at the national level.

117. The Sustainable Development Goals advocacy group, co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Norway and the President of Ghana, had been commissioned to strengthen international resolve for global action. The group's work had clearly shown that successful follow-up of the Goals would require ownership, leadership and innovative public-private partnerships, and the 2030 Agenda would unwelcome if the realities on the ground were not taken into consideration in its implementation.

118. Ensuring access to health services, clean energy, education and decent work were obvious routes for reducing poverty, as were decisive actions to combat climate change and pollution, both onshore and offshore. However, in addition, good governance was critical: it was necessary to pursue policies that promoted inclusiveness and equality. Translating the 2030 Agenda into results on the ground required a strong and legitimate multilateral system. In that regard, the report by th Secretary-General entitled "Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda — Ensuring a Better Future for All" was welcome; his Government looked forward to its follow-up and the issuance of the final report later in 2017.

119. Children, youth and adolescents, the "2030 generation", must be partners in collective efforts if poverty in all its forms was to be eliminated. It was also important to ensure gender equality in all policy areas covered by the 2030 Agenda.

120. The 2030 Agenda was a clarion call that his Government was heeding to address the root causes of poverty, conflict, extremism, migration and climate change.

121. **Ms. Valiente Díaz** (Cuba), Deputy Director of the Multilateral Affairs Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that 38 years on from the address to the General Assembly by the leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, the problems he had denounced persisted, and the global situation remained of deep concern. The need for a new development model was clear: the culture of privilege must be replaced by a culture of equality.

122. A genuine global development partnership was essential. New, additional and predictable resources were needed to implement the ambitious 2030 Agenda. Those resources existed: less than half of annual global military spending would fund most of the Sustainable Development Goals.

123. In spite of the embargo that had been imposed on Cuba for almost 60 years, the country had shared its modest resources with other nations, having put in place cooperation projects in 157 countries. Hundreds of thousands of Cuban doctors, health personnel, teachers, sports coaches and other specialists had worked throughout the world in a spirit of solidarity.

124. In order to contribute towards global achievement of the Goals, her Government was establishing a national mechanism that would coordinate the work of institutions, civil society and the private sector. The People's National Assembly had recently approved the foundations of a national plan for economic and social development up to the year 2030, the most debated document in the history of the country. Her Government reaffirmed its commitment to working for a more just, equitable and inclusive world where people were acknowledged as the central element of sustainable development.

125. **Mr. Silberhorn** (Germany), Parliamentary State Secretary, Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, said that global challenges required global responses. The Sustainable Development Goals

would only be achieved multilaterally, through mutual agreement, compromise and the adoption of agreed targets. Germany was therefore using its presidency of the Group of 20 to increase the focus on the 2030 Agenda.

126. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda started at home. Encouragingly, the number of countries reporting on their implementation experiences in 2017 was twice as high as in 2016. In January 2017 his Government had adopted its national sustainability strategy, which contained ambitious goals, including making 60 per cent of energy renewable by 2050.

127. Poverty reduction was taking place alongside sustainable development and climate action. As the Sustainable Development Goals were intrinsically linked, his Government was seeking to act in a holistic way by, inter alia: assisting partner countries with the implementation of their intended nationally determined commitments to the Paris Agreement; seeking to improve the resilience of the world's poorest by providing drought-resistant seeds; helping people to prepare for floods; funding climate-risk insurance programmes; and advocating for better governance, the empowerment of women and investments in education and health. Germany had achieved the 0.7 per cent ODA target for the first time in 2016.

128. Lastly, the private sector was indispensable for the creation of value and jobs, which enabled people to earn a living and be included in prosperity. ODA was not enough, however, and it had never been intended to cover all costs; in Africa alone some $600 billion a year would be needed to implement the 2030 Agenda. Germany had therefore used its presidency of the Group of 20 to form partnerships with African countries, where it was fostering private investment to support employment, particularly in rural areas. It was necessary to take responsibility for people and the planet, with the 2030 Agenda as a guide.

129. **Mr. Gumende** (Mozambique), Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations, said that in order for the Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved they must be integrated into national planning and budgeting instruments; all stakeholders, including local communities and marginalized groups, must participate in their realization at the national and local levels; accountability mechanisms must be put in place to ensure timely evaluation and monitoring of progress; financial resources must be available; and bilateral and multilateral partnerships, including with the United Nations, must be strengthened.

130. The early consultations that the United Nations had held with his Government regarding the Goals had facilitated the alignment of the national development plan for the period 2015-2019 with the 2030 Agenda. The plan included all 17 Goals and poverty eradication efforts had been improved due to synergies between the plan and the 2030 Agenda, particularly with regard to developing human capital, building resilient economic and social infrastructures, strengthening industrialization, innovation and the sustainable management of natural resources, and promoting employment, especially youth employment.

131. His Government was currently working to define an effective monitoring structure that would include all major stakeholders. The decentralization process that the Government had been strengthening over the past decade, which increased the capacity of local authorities and communities to plan, implement and monitor the national development agenda, would also support the achievement of the Goals. In line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda commitments on financing for development, the Government had established the National Fund for Sustainable Development, which was an instrument for the promotion and financing of programmes and projects that contributed to sustainable development.

132. The work being done on the Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations country team in Mozambique was commendable. His Government expected the team's role to be further strengthened, in line with the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

133. **Mr. Casas** (Spain), Vice-Minister for International Cooperation and for Ibero-America, said that at the national level, public policies were underpinned by the 2030 Agenda. As no actor could implement the ambitious 2030 Agenda in isolation, his Government was working with various ministries of other nations. The autonomous communities and local governments were also involved; their role was to localize implementation. The Government was also collaborating with non-governmental entities, including civil society organizations, private sector actors, universities, trade unions and foundations. Continuous and high-quality dialogue was essential with a view to developing alliances and reaching consensus.

134. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals a supra-ministerial authority was needed with the responsibility and capacity for coordination to strengthen policy coherence; the flexibility to involve all actors in a balanced way; and the communicative

capacity to effectively reach society. His Government had therefore appointed a Special Ambassador for the 2030 Agenda, who would be responsible for developing an overarching plan for international cooperation for the next four years, which would cover policy areas that were new for Spain, including migration and development, and security and development.

135. At the international level, his Government would seek to be a committed and innovative partner in the implementation of the European Consensus on Development and the work done by the Group of 20. The 2030 Agenda would be the central theme of the 2018 session of the Ibero-American Community.

136. In 2013, his Government had established the first United Nations fund for the Sustainable Development Goals. Spain was following the voluntary national review process with great interest and was learning from the countries that presented their reviews.

137. Policy coordination meant ensuring that resources were used efficiently and effectively to achieve prosperous, inclusive, sustainable and supportive societies. It was imperative not only to leave no one behind, but also to rescue those who had become marginalized and to provide for future generations.

138. **Mr. Artjoki** (Finland), State Secretary, Ministry of Finance, said that work in four areas must be prioritized. Firstly, as climate change was one of the greatest challenges faced by the global community, and it burdened the poorest most, the Paris Agreement must be implemented without delay. Secondly, it was necessary to empower women and girls by eliminating discriminatory laws and policies, and securing equal, full and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Access to reproductive rights was one of the pillars of his country's development plan, and the previous week his Government had pledged additional support of €21 million to the United Nations Population Fund and international civil society organizations. Thirdly, it was necessary to strengthen economies in an inclusive way that guaranteed decent work for all — in particular, youth unemployment must be tackled. A socially and economically responsible private sector had a vital role to play in job creation, as did private financial flows that supported sustainable development. Lastly, it was necessary to respect the planet, since poor populations were most likely to lose their livelihoods as a consequence of environmental degradation or natural disasters.

139. His Government had made considerable progress since the presentation by Finland of its voluntary national review in 2016. It had prepared a national plan for achieving the Goals, which had been presented to the Parliament in February 2017, and which would be updated every four years. Finland was on track in terms of ensuring accountability, systematic follow-up and review of implementation, and would next report to the high-level political forum in 2020. A youth group for the 2030 Agenda had been created; its role would be to monitor the work of the Government, and its members would act as sustainable development spokespersons in places where young people congregated. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda required the participation of all. Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development was an innovative national tool that enabled individuals, municipalities, companies and organizations to participate in achieving the 2030 Agenda by making and fulfilling individual commitments. To date, over 700 concrete commitments had been made.

140. His delegation looked forward to the adoption of the ministerial declaration that would provide guidance to the United Nations system and to Member States regarding implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

141. Lastly, with regard to Goal 6, on water and sanitation, stakeholders must work to develop more coordinated and impactful global water architecture.

142. **Mr. Muhammad-Bande** (Nigeria), Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations, said that his Government had established a special office for the Sustainable Development Goals. The new office was headed by a Senior Special Assistant to the President, who was responsible for intergovernmental coordination, planning, multi-stakeholder partnerships, resource mobilization, and communication and advocacy related to the Goals. In addition, in order to ensure national buy-in, all 36 state governments and the Federal Capital Territory had the same organizational and institutional structure for accomplishing the Goals. An interministerial committee had been established to ensure inter-agency coordination. In view of the critical role of other stakeholders, the Government had also established a private sector advisory group on the Goals, a development partners' forum on the Goals and a civil society advisory group on the Goals. It had also launched the National Youth Service Corps Champions programme, which was designed to raise awareness of the Goals across Nigeria.

143. The Sustainable Development Goals were vital for his country's development and had therefore been integrated into the national Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017-2020. The Plan was intended to support economic diversification by accelerating

investment in infrastructure and human capital and by creating jobs in key sectors. The Government had carried out a needs assessment and policy analysis exercise in order to generate baseline data for public investment planning and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Poverty, hunger, unemployment and inequality were being addressed in a multisectoral way through the country's Conditional Grants Scheme, along with other poverty eradication initiatives.

144. His Government remained committed to the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. However, illicit financial flows were depriving many developing countries, including Nigeria, of the resources required to achieve the Goals. International cooperation to staunch those flows was therefore needed.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.